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THE PHANTOM PERIL OF GERMAN EMIGRATION AND SOUTH-AMERICAN SETTLEMENTS.

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THE question of German emigration, in former years the subject of widespread and animated discussion, has been revived of late, and there is a noticeable tendency in the international press to invent a "German Peril in South America." It is the object of this paper to give a short definition of Germany's emigration policy, and to remove various misunderstandings which have been created frequently by telegrams emanating from European sources, having as their object the creation of distrust, especially in the United States, with regard to the German policy in South America.

German emigration has dwindled so steadily and rapidly that at present it would seem to have reached the low-water mark in its downward trend. A glance at the official statistics of emigration will indicate the remarkable extent of this retrogression. In 1852, Germans, to the number of 145,918, and in 1854, to the number of 215,009, went to the United States alone. In 1872, just after the unification of the Empire, the grand total of German emigration amounted to 128,152; in 1873,

to 110,438; in 1881, to 220,902; in 1882, to 203,585 persons. During the years succeeding 1882 up to 1892, the figures, in the average, still surpassed 100,000, but since then they have shown a notable falling off. Thus, only 22,309 in 1900; 22,073 in 1901; 32,098 in 1902; 36,310 in 1903; 27,984 in 1904—were recorded as having gone from Germany to lands beyond the seas.

This retrogressive tendency appears the more surprising when it is remembered that Germany's population, mainly as a result of the excess of births over deaths, but partly through its inland migration, has, since the foundation of the Empire, increased at an average annual rate of half a million, during recent years at the still higher rate of 800,000 *per annum*. The cause for this seeming anomaly lies in the extraordinary economical development of Germany during the last decade, in the consequent steady improvement of the social status of its laboring classes, brought about by a progressive rise in wages, and in the elimination, thereby, of one of the strongest incentives to emigration in former days: the hope, at the bottom of modern emigration in general, to receive a better reward for labor abroad than under prevailing economic conditions could be secured at home.

In view of this striking decline in the volume of German emigration, it is somewhat difficult to find a satisfactory explanation for the attitude of a certain portion of the foreign press, which, in utter disregard of incontestable statistical and historical facts, still eagerly grasps at every opportunity, however far-fetched, to assail Germany's emigration policy, question its loyalty and by this means stir up public sentiment against the German nation. These attacks, partly open, partly covert, are more pointedly directed against German emigration to South America generally, and to South Brazil in particular.

Constant allusions are made in these interpretations of an imaginary "writing on the wall" to an alleged "German danger," which, in the disguise of German immigration, past and to come, threatens the political and economic sovereignty of the South-American republics. With a "*videant consules*," imputations are cast abroad of political aspirations on the part of Germany in the southern half of this hemisphere, in the realization of which the German settlements already there are to be the stepping-stone. Ominous hints are disseminated of intentions of territorial aggrandizement in South Brazil, which Germany

proposes to effect with the aid of the German-Brazilian colonists, backed by its powerful fleet now building up. Subsidized, it is averred, by the mother country, these settlements are to form a state within the state, a "thorn in the flesh" of South America.

Another of these fabrications informs us that the German "Central Bureau of Information for Emigrants," created several years ago, in exchange for official aid received by it from the Imperial Government, is engaged in conducting a well and systematically organized campaign for peopling South America, and especially South Brazil, with German settlements. Intelligent and well-informed persons everywhere are, of course, fully aware of the absurdity of these accusations and calumnies; nor does it appear that the Governments mainly interested in questions of migration and other bodies of influence are at all inclined to lend a willing ear to these misrepresentations.

Nevertheless, when it is remembered how readily certain classes of people are accessible to even the most ludicrous rumors of this kind, such inventions, inventions though they be, are not without some effect. Past experience is not lacking in proofs of the fact that, by such instrumentalities, public sentiments and public passions may be aroused which are anything but conducive to the friendly approach of nations to each other and to a mutual understanding of their respective individualities.

An impartial review of South-American conditions, as they have actually shaped themselves in course of time through German immigration, may be of some aid in averting such regrettable consequences and in refuting these attacks against Germany.

It is hardly necessary to say that large tracts of land in South America, particularly in South Brazil, the Argentine Republic and South Chile, are by their natural environments eminently suitable as homesteads for German immigrants. A climate blessed in its mildness; a virgin soil of great fertility; lands as yet uninvaded by colonists and still available for occupancy; living conditions similar to those prevailing at home; a Government benevolently inclined towards promoting German immigration—all these factors combine to attract Germans to the hospitable South-American shores with their alluring promises of affording a prosperous existence. Under these circumstances, and led by the innate migratory instinct of their fertile race, Germans in numbers large enough, if taken by themselves, yet small in com-

parison with the quota contributed by the fatherland to other countries, chose South America for their colonizing activities.

German migration to Brazil began in the twenties of the past century. Great difficulties were encountered by the early settlers; with characteristic German perseverance they plodded along, and soon established the fact of the vitality of their settlements. In South Brazil, especially, a portion of these settlements have attained a high degree of prosperity. Reaching there, as a rule, with hardly any means, these sturdy Teutons have gradually built up for themselves a safe and comfortable livelihood. Germans in speech, Brazilians in citizenship, they have founded scores of thriving colonies. Their descendants have through generations preserved their German identity and, as a natural consequence, a preference for goods of German origin.

To-day, German merchants are working successfully in the commercial pursuits of the Republic. German trade and navigation are progressing in a gratifying manner. In many lines, the achievements of German colonists are recognized as standards of perfection. Rio Grande do Sul, the most southern State of the Republic, and Santa Catharina are inhabited by about 200,000 persons of German extraction. Under the active leadership of men of the type of Dr. Blumenau, who exercised their influence towards establishing close relations between the Brazilian Republic and its German element of population, and towards making the interests of the latter subservient to those of the former, the German settlements in these southern parts prospered in a remarkable degree. In Santa Catharina, the much-maligned "Hamburg Colonizing Society" of 1849, later absorbed by the "Hanseatic Colonization Company," has rendered material assistance in the upbuilding of the German colonies, by furnishing capital for the improvement of its own landed property in these regions, by making surveys, building roads and bridges and thus employing scores of newly arrived and indigent immigrants.

In Parana and Sao Paulo, the Germans, although for years left without any noteworthy reinforcement from abroad, and finding themselves confronted with a strong element of Italian and Polish-Galician immigrants, have likewise succeeded in the fields of commerce, capital, enterprise and intelligence. German immigration to the Argentine Republic has thus far been of relative insignificance. In a total of 2,279,000 immigrants, re-

corded by that country for the period 1857-1895, there were only about 25,000 Germans. The Germans of Buenos Ayres, the capital of the Republic, are held in high esteem by their fellow citizens; in commerce they occupy an honorable position. In Chile, Germans have rendered eminent services in the domains of colonization, trade and navigation, as well as in military and public life. Nowhere, perhaps, on the southern portion of this hemisphere has the civilizing influence of their immigration made itself more keenly and more penetratingly felt than in that very country, the southern section of which owes its economic development almost entirely to the coming of the Germans.

Moreover, this movement has been entirely spontaneous, without any stimulus from the Government of the mother country. On the contrary, the latter may be said to have exercised its powers in the direction of obstructing rather than of fostering it. Students of German emigration will remember the Prussian "von der Heydt rescript" and similar decrees, which, for a time, prohibited the granting of any concessions for the transportation of emigrants to Brazil.

If it now be asked whether German immigration has proved a danger, or even a disadvantage, to South America, the answer must be decidedly in the negative. Witness the history of the last eighty years. The offspring of the early settlers in South America have almost invariably renounced or lost their German citizenship. In this they were indirectly aided by the laws of their native country. While perpetuating their mother tongue, their German customs and manners, they have embraced the citizenship of their adopted country. In closest touch with the interests of their new fatherland, they have distinguished themselves as eager and successful promoters of its advancement and economic development. They have not the remotest thought of returning to their former homes. They are free from any hankering after political separation, which, if it were suggested to them, they would repudiate as a serious detriment to their own interests, and as irreconcilable with their allegiance to the country of their adoption. They stand aloof from revolutionary movements and internal political strifes. Guided by their characteristic orderliness, their habitual deliberation and a correct understanding of the reciprocal relations between human right and duty, they are a bulwark of strength to the state, an element,

in short, which has rendered infinite service in elevating the standard of civilization in the South-American republics.

It was but natural that the thriving condition of these settlements, and the economic effect of their demands upon export and industry of the mother country, turned the eyes of German economists to the possibilities presented by the southern half of this continent as an outlet for the surplus population of the fatherland. German public opinion, even before, but notably during, the period of Germany's high tide of emigration in the course of the eighties, raised its voice in support of a policy of directing German emigration into South-American channels. "Diversion of emigration from North to South America" then became, and for a long time remained, the shibboleth of all those who advocated *economic utilization* of emigration as a postulate of public opinion.

Of the attitude assumed by the German Government in dealing with this popular demand and with the question of emigration in general, documentary evidence may be found in the German Emigration-Law and the introductory *exposé* of its underlying "motives," a careful perusal of which will be found of material assistance in arriving at a correct understanding of Germany's emigration policy. Emigration, in the eyes of that law, is an economic phase of the social life of the nation, which, in itself, is an economic loss to the commonwealth. It should not be prohibited, for that would interfere with the constitutional rights of the individual. But it should not, on the other hand, receive governmental aid, regardless of the country of its final destination. From this fundamental point of view, it is made a punishable offence to stimulate emigration by artificial means or by systematic effort.

It is true that the law, as set forth in its preamble, favors the diversion of emigration from countries which it considers ill-suited to German habitation, to countries of opposite characteristics. In the latter category, however, it classes in a summary way all foreign countries, the climatic, agricultural and other surrounding conditions of which are deemed to be well adapted to serve as a basis for prosperous German settlements, in which Germanism may thrive and the German element, through its own consumption of German manufactures, become an intermediary of increased *traffic exchange* between the new and the

old country. In the former class are grouped all countries in which German individuality, language and traits are most likely to be absorbed through assimilation, and the relations between the mother country and its former subjects to be loosened.

Special pains are taken by the legislature to avoid indiscriminate generalization from these points of view with reference to certain countries as entireties. The public demand, previously alluded to, for an outright diversion of emigration from North to South America, is subjected to severe criticism. In justification of this position, particular stress is placed upon the fact that in North America, as well as elsewhere, there are German settlements, which through generations have preserved their German identity. In South America, on the other hand, the aspects are not invariably as bright as is frequently surmised. Instances are on record of German settlements in South America which have assimilated as early as in the second or third generation of their existence. Lack of suitable ground, of adequate protection of the rights of ownership, and of appropriate channels for marketing their goods has brought disaster to more than one South-American colony of Germans. In thus deliberately refraining from any generalization in their references to North and South America, the framers of the law were evidently guided by the desire to curb, at the outset, any tendency in the direction of such generalization. Under the law and its "motives," questions as to the fitness of certain countries or districts for German colonization are to be taken up individually and decided upon careful examination of all the local conditions prevailing in each particular case.

In dealing with emigration, indiscriminate commendation of, or warning against, whole countries or parts of countries, presenting, perhaps, the most diversified conditions, is to be avoided. It is pointed out that for years to come North America is bound to remain the principal goal of German exodus. Transportation of German emigrants to the United States and Canada, as well as to Australia, is, therefore, a matter of special concern to the legislator. The law also emphasizes the fact that it is not one of its functions to dissuade Germans from emigrating to these countries, their general conditions being such as to afford a certain guarantee for the future welfare of the emigrants.

The soundness of these fundamental principles is incontestable.

They bear the stamp of having been dictated, solely, by considerations of national progress, without, however, losing sight of the interests of the emigrant or of those of his chosen country. They need not shun the light of publicity, and they have been adopted by Great Britain, Italy, Austria-Hungary and other countries as a guide in shaping their own emigration policy.

As regards the "Central Bureau of Information for Emigrants," the attacks directed against it are likewise void of foundation. The calumniators of the "Bureau" are often pleased to brand it as being instrumental in furthering a policy of expansion, which, by transplanting vast multitudes into Brazilian soil, hopes to pave the way for the realization of political aspirations in South America. There is not a shadow of truth in these allegations. The primary object of the "Bureau," according to the official programme outlined for its activities, is to safeguard the interests of Germans in moderate circumstances who supply the bulk of German emigration. In its general features, it is patterned after the "Emigrants' Information Office," of London, the "*Bureau de Renseignements*," of Brussels, the Swiss, Italian, and other similar institutions, some of which have been in existence for many years.

Its origin is traceable to the consideration that persons bent upon emigrating should have access at home to reliable information concerning the countries of their choice. The "Bureau," although supervised and financially aided by the Government, has no official character, but is attached to a private society. Under the rules of its organization, approved by the Chancellor of the Empire, it is forbidden to engage in any policy of emigration. Its services as a source of information are limited to the answering of inquiries addressed to it. The answers must be confined to the specific countries named by the inquirer; within these bounds their scope may be extended to any country, including the German colonies, and *not* to South America alone.

According to the statistics published by the "Bureau" since its creation, its services in the line described were as follows:

From	Total number of answers to inquiries.	Subject of inquiry.					
		German colonies.	United States.	South Brazil.	Brazil.	Argentine Republic.	Chile.
April 1 to Sept. 30, '02....	2654	1700	134	146	66	52	25
Oct. 1, '02, to Sept. 30, '03..	3376	2315	215	237	147	76	44
Oct. 1, '03, to Sept. 30, '04..	3308	2348	244	273	115	128	55
Oct. 1, '04, to Sept. 30, '05..	2663	1888	154	232	111	120	37

Note the insignificant number of questions asked and answered regarding South America, as against the total shown in the first column of the table. No further evidence is required to show the flimsiness of the assertion that the "Bureau," in consideration of governmental aid, centres its energies on promoting German emigration to South America and especially to South Brazil.

Unnecessary, therefore, and ridiculous are, finally, the frequent warnings, sounded in certain publications of alleged dangers threatening South America through German emigration. According to the official German statistics, the total number of Germans who emigrated from the fatherland during the period 1871 (the year of the unification of the Empire) to 1894, amounted to 2,616,731. Of this number, 2,380,792 emigrated to the United States, 19,011 to British North America, 54,719 to Brazil, 31,814 to Argentina, Chile and other South-American countries, 13,012 to Africa. Since 1898 German emigration has been as follows:

NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS TO

	United States.	Brazil.	Other South America.	Total.
1898.....	18,563	821	1139	22,221
1899.....	19,806	896	997	29,323
1900.....	19,703	364	330	22,309
1901.....	19,912	402	271	22,073
1902.....	29,211	807	263	32,098
1903.....	33,649	693	252	36,310
1904.....	26,085	355	316	27,984

It will be observed that, according to these figures, the quota of German emigration to Brazil was a very small percentage of the total. The percentage of Germany's contribution of emigration to the rest of South America is still lower. It may be safely left to the intelligent reader to decide for himself whether these figures are really indicative of a well-planned German movement for the colonization of South America, and whether they really portend any danger to that continent. Like results are obtained from the figures compiled by the German Bureau of Statistics as to the German population of all countries:

Country.	Native Germans.	German subjects.
The United States.....	2,669,164	?
The Argentine.....	?	17,143
Chile.....	?	7,049
Brazil	20,000	8,000

Thus, again, the phantom of a German peril in South America

disappears before the searchlight of statistics. Note, on the other hand, the enormous number of Germans residing in the United States. It is a statistical fact that of its entire emigration Germany, in the average, sends over 96 per cent. to the United States. According to the model American immigration statistics, the influx of Germans into the Union during the period 1820 to 1870 amounted to 2,368,483, and during the period 1820 to 1903 to 5,138,091, or 25 per cent. of the alien arrivals in that country.

The Federal Census of 1900 places the number of native Germans in the United States at 2,663,418, against a total population of 75,693,734. Mannhard* is authority for the statement that the number of German immigrants now residing in the United States, together with their direct offspring, amounts to 26,000,000. The percentage of German blood circulating in the veins of the inhabitants of the United States, Mr. Mannhard estimates at 33.56. German immigration has thus contributed vastly more to the upbuilding of the population of the United States than to that of any other country. Nor are there any present indications that the United States will cease to be the Mecca of German emigration. Of space available for settlement, there is still an abundance. On a land area which, according to American economists, could support a population of 800,000,000, there are at present only 80,000,000 inhabitants.

Even now, German civilization, German language, prosperous German schools, churches, societies, and papers are everywhere throughout the United States in ample evidence. Yet, who ever thinks of speaking of a German peril in the United States? German immigration, on the contrary, is now, as ever, welcomed in the United States as a desirable influx, as an economic gain to the population. Equity demands that German emigration to South America be judged by the same standard, and that, instead of being denounced as a peril to the state, it be recognized as an increment to the population which, small though it be, true to its mission, may be safely relied upon to contribute its full share to the progress and economic development of the South-American republics.

STERNBURG.

* Cf. "*Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*," October, 1903.